

Message Text

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16

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01 CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FPC-01

INT-05 OMB-01 SAM-01 OES-05 STR-04 TRSE-00 FEA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 609

UNCLAS CARACAS 10965

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG PFOR VE

SUBJ: OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM BRIBERY CASE

REF: CARACAS 10819 AND 10649

1. JOSE TORO HARDY, A 33-YEAR-OLD VENEZUELAN ECONOMIST, HAS PUBLICLY DENIED ACCUSATIONS MADE IN A SUIT FILED IN HOUSTON BY JOSE A KAUFFMAN, A FORMER CARACAS MANAGER OF THE OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION, THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A \$10,000 BRIBE FROM OCCIDENTAL. TORO ALSO DENIED THAT HE HAD EVER BEEN EMPLOYED BY THE MINISTRIES OF FINANCE OR MINES OR BY THE VENEZUELAN PETROLEUM CORPORATION (CVP) OR HAD EVER BEEN A DEPUTY, AS ALLEGED BY KAUFFMAN. TORO SAID HE HAD BEEN A CONTRACT ADVISER TO THE FINANCE MINISTRY AND LATER DIRECTOR OF THE VENEZUELAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, BUT AT NO TIME WAS EVER IN A POSITION TO INFLUENCE THE GOV IN FAVOR OF OCCIDENTAL. TORO DID DECLARE THAT HE HAS A SMALL MINORITY INTEREST IN THE ALTAMAR DRILLING COMPANY, WHICH HAD DONE BUSINESS WITH OCCIDENTAL, AMONG OTHER COMPANIES.

2. PRESS REPORTS COTOBER 21 THAT TORO HAD VOLUNTARILY APPEARED THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PREVIOUS DAY BEFORE THE JUDGE HAVING COGNIZANCE OF THE CASE AND

RATIFIED HIS EARLIER STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS. TORO TOLD PRESS THAT AS A SHAREHOLDER OF ALTAMAR HE HAD EXPERIENCED PROBLEMS WITH JOSEPH KAUFFMAN, WHO, HE SAID, HAD PUT OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF ALTAMAR WHEN HE WAS OCCIDENTAL'S MANAGER IN CARACAS. TORO ASCRIBED KAUFFMAN'S ACCUSATIONS AGAINST HIM AS PIQUE STEMMING FROM THAT TIME.
SHLAUDEMAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CORRUPTION, BRIBERY, PRESS COMMENTS, ALLEGATIONS, INVESTIGATIONS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CARACA10965
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750366-0180
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751034/aaaabdyd.tel
Line Count: 68
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 CARACAS 10819
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 NOV 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 NOV 2003 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <02 FEB 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM BRIBERY CASE
TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, VE, OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM, (HARDY, JOSE TORO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006